

## **TRANSPARENCY: COMMISSION FACILITATES ACCESS TO MEMBER STATE INFORMATION ON BENEFICIARIES OF CAP PAYMENTS**

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To further improve openness and access to information, the European Commission is publishing on its EUROPA website a page with links to Member State websites containing information about end-beneficiaries of payments under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This step is part of the European Transparency Initiative (ETI) Full transparency should be ensured with the publication of all end-beneficiaries of CAP payments in line with the Commission's proposals introduced in the Financial Regulation. The Council has agreed to start this process from 2009, and discussions are still ongoing with the European Parliament.

"European citizens have a right to know what their money is spent on. Publishing these web links is a crucial step in making this information available to all," said Mariann Fischer Boel, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, who has been closely involved in the ETI right from the start.

Today the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development published a web page with a list of links which were provided by the Member States and lead to websites with information on the beneficiaries of CAP payments under shared management. This new web page is maintained to facilitate public access to this information; the websites themselves are under the sole control and responsibility of EU Member States and are not under the control of the Commission services. The degree of coverage and detail as well as the way of presenting the information on the web sites varies considerably from one Member State to another.

The new web page currently contains links to websites in the following eleven Member States: Belgium, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. As the number of countries giving access is increasing, more links will be added.

A previous step on the way towards more transparency was the publication of information about end-beneficiaries of centrally-managed EU funds on the Commission's EUROPA website. On 10 October 2006 two web sites containing information on EU grants and public contracts were made available to the public (see IP/06/1343). The move followed a communication in November 2005 calling for increased transparency about the EU's handling of funds entrusted to it by European citizens and the provisions introduced by the Commission in its proposal to review the Financial Regulation. The Council agreed until now to start this process from 2009 as regards CAP payments and the matter is still to be discussed with the European Parliament. Final agreement is expected later this month.

There are two main types of EU-funding, funds which are managed centrally and directly by the Commission, such as those in the field of research, and funds whose management is shared between the EU and the Member States, such as the common agricultural and fisheries policies. In the latter case, the EU entrusts management to the Member States. The bulk of EU spending, 76%, is spent on funds which are under EU Member States' shared management. The availability of beneficiaries' data depends on each Member State.

Member State websites providing information on beneficiaries of CAP payments under shared management: [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/funding/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/funding/index_en.htm)  
Beneficiaries of Grants: [http://ec.europa.eu/grants/beneficiaries\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/grants/beneficiaries_en.htm)  
Beneficiaries of Public Contracts: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_contracts/beneficiaries\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_contracts/beneficiaries_en.htm)  
European Transparency Initiative:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_barroso/kallas/transparency\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/kallas/transparency_en.htm)  
Modified proposal to the Financial Regulation at:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/documents/implement\\_control\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/documents/implement_control_en.htm)

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